



@USAID_Colombia

facebook.com/USAIDColombia



PHOTO BY HANZ RIPPE AND
FERNANDA PINEDA

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION IN MIGRANT COMMUNITIES (MEI)

Supporting licit economic opportunities for Venezuelan migrants and Colombian citizens in communities impacted by migration.

OVERVIEW

The Economic Integration in Migrant Communities Activity (MEI) works with public and private sector actors to address social and economic challenges resulting from sustained mass migration from Venezuela. As of January 2022, over two million people have fled from Venezuela to Colombia. Most of these migrants have settled in Colombia's urban areas and border towns in search of employment and access to public services, like education and healthcare. MEI helps integrate migrants into Colombian communities by increasing migrants and receptor community members' access to licit economic opportunities, and by improving private sector investment in communities with large migrant populations. Through this work, MEI hopes to enhance trust, social cohesion, and sustainable development in receptor communities. MEI is implemented in urban areas with high concentrations of migrants, including Barranquilla, Bogotá, Bucaramanga, Cali, Cartagena, Cúcuta, Medellín, and Riohacha, and it runs from March 2022 to March 2027.

COMPONENTS

IMPROVING ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

MEI improves Venezuelan migrants and Colombian citizens' access to licit and formal employment opportunities. The activity also strengthens the technical and soft skills of migrant, Colombian returnee, and receptor community members to start and grow businesses.

DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC OPPURTUNITIES

MEI fosters private sector investment and commercial linkages in receptor and migrant communities. It does this to foster greater employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for migrants and Colombian citizens.

ENHANCING THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

MEI supports awareness raising and effective implementation of the Colombian economic integration regulatory framework on employment, entrepreneurship, and financial inclusion. The activity engages community, public, and private sector actors in these efforts, and works at regional and national levels.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Improve migrants' access to capital;
- Strengthen migrants' entrepreneurial skills;
- Improve community awareness of new immigration policies;
- Facilitate workforce development in migrant and receptor communities;
- Encourage businesses to adopt inclusive, migrant-centered human resource practices;
- Increase public and private investment in migrant and receptor community businesses;
- Strengthen migrant and receptor communities' access to financial services and education; and
- Support business accelerators and mentorship networks for migrant and receptor community entrepreneurs.